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## PROGRAM FOR FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION.

### Conference of Agricultural Representatives of Thirty-two States with the Secretary of Agriculture Prepares Program to Increase Production, Promote Food Saving, Provide Labor for Agricultural Industries, and Secure Better Distribution of Food Products.

The Secretary of Agriculture requested the State agricultural officials and representatives of the agricultural colleges in all the States from New York to the Rocky Mountains to meet him in St. Louis to discuss the agricultural situation in the present national crisis. The conference convened at the Jefferson Hotel at 10 o'clock Monday, April 9, and continued through Tuesday. Thirty-two States were represented by sixty-five officials and the department by the Secretary of Agriculture and the chiefs of the Bureau of Plant Industry and the Office of Markets and Rural Organization.

After a thorough discussion of the major problems involved, the conference decided to deal with the whole subject matter in four major divisions:

1. Production and labor.
2. Distribution and prices.
3. Economy and utilization.
4. Effective organization.

A representative committee of 15<sup>1</sup> was appointed by the conference to formulate its views on these subjects and to submit suggestions for courses of action. Subcommittees were appointed by this committee to deal with each of the enumerated matters. The subcommittees reported to the full committee, which in turn reported to the conference.

After consideration of the report of the committee of 15, the conference decided to express its views and to urge the courses of action, as indicated below:

#### The Farmer's Responsibility.

Upon the farmer rests in large measure the final responsibility of winning the war in which we are now involved. The importance to the Nation of an adequate food supply, especially for the present year, can not be over-emphasized. The world's food reserve is very low. Not only our own consumers, but much of the world at large, must rely more completely than ever before upon the American farmer. Therefore, the man

who tills the soil and supports the soldier in the field, and the family at home, is rendering as noble and patriotic a service as is the man who bears the brunt of battle.

The American farmer has long shown his ability to produce more food per man and at lower cost per unit than any other farmer in the world, but he has never had to do his best. He needs to do his best now. This is not the time in which to experiment with new and untried crops and processes. It is very important that the farmer devote his principal efforts to the production of such crops and the employment of such methods as are well established in his community and as are likely to yield the maximum return in food and clothing material.

Within the next 60 days the final measure of crop acreage and food production for this year will have been established. We urge the importance of the immediate mobilization of all available service of the Federal and State Departments of Agriculture and the colleges of agriculture in cooperation with the press, the banks, the commercial organizations, the religious and the social societies, that all may heartily join with the farmer in performing the patriotic duty of providing and conserving food.

Because of the world shortage of food, it is scarcely possible that the production of staple crops by the farmers of the United States can be too great this year. There is every reason to believe that a generous price will be paid for the harvest of their fields.

#### Increasing the Food Supply.

There is yet time to add substantially to the bread supply by increasing the acreage of spring wheat in the Northern States. Throughout the United States, east of the one hundredth meridian, the corn area may be increased to advantage, with a view to its uses both for human food and animal production.

The production of a normal cotton crop is necessary. This can best be accomplished by more intensive cultivation and increased fertilization rather than by increasing the acreage and thus neglecting the food and forage crops so important to the South.

In the districts where wheat has been winter killed replanting is suggested with oats,

corn, or sorghum, as climatic conditions may determine. Where barley and oats are proved and reliable crops, they should be planted to the maximum that can be effectively handled. In portions of the Northern and Eastern States, where the season is too short for the great staple crops, the buckwheat acreage may well be increased.

An important increase in our food supply may be made by enlarging the area planted to navy beans in the North and West and to Mexican and Tepary beans in the Southwest, and by stimulating in every reasonable way an increase in the area of potatoes planted, especially for local use.

Sweet potatoes in the South will undoubtedly be needed in their fresh state in larger quantity than usual and also for storing for winter use either in their natural state or as canned or desiccated products.

Where peanuts succeed, production may well be enlarged because of their value both as food and forage. A reasonable seed reserve for replanting tilled crops should be held wherever practicable.

While it is important to utilize available lands in the staple small grains and tilled crops, care should be taken to avoid undue encroachment on the area used for pasturage or hay which is required for live-stock production.

Authority should be granted the Secretary of Agriculture to advance to farmers under proper safeguards seeds required to insure the production of crops decided to be necessary for the welfare of the Nation.

#### THE SCHOOL CHILDREN'S PART.

We appeal to the youth of the Nation to put forth every effort to produce foodstuffs in gardens and fields. There could be no better expression of true patriotic devotion to the country. It has been demonstrated through the boys' and girls' clubs that it is possible for the farm family to supply itself with much of the food required, thereby releasing the commercial product of the country for the needs of the people in the cities and in foreign lands.

In a normal season it is certain that there will be large quantities of perishable products which can not be properly preserved in the home. To meet this emergency it is

<sup>1</sup> The personnel of the several committees of different States and institutions represented at the conference and the names of those in attendance will be found at close of this statement.



recommended that local and municipal drying and canning establishments be improvised to conserve this material.

### Keeping up the Meat Supply.

The live-stock holdings of the farmers of the United States are already too low. It would be most unfortunate if these numbers be diminished further under the pressure of the present demand for food. Indeed, an early increase of the animal products of the country should be made. Such an increase must come chiefly through the enlarging of our feed supply by more successful methods of feeding, and through more complete control of contagious diseases.

Milk production could be increased fully one-fourth by more liberal and intelligent feeding. Pork production could be increased substantially through the more extensive use of fall litters, better care, and feeding. The poultry products of the United States could be doubled within a year.

Contagious diseases of farm animals take a toll of more than a quarter of a billion dollars annually. More than half of this loss is due to controllable diseases, such as hog cholera, black-leg and Texas fever. The Federal Government, cooperating with the States, could profitably expand its intensive regulatory services so as to embrace every important live-stock district in this country.

### Mobilizing Farm Labor.

One of the principal limiting elements of food production is the labor supply on the farm. Indiscriminate enlistment from the farms with no plan for labor replacement will reduce food production below its present low level.

The plan for public defense should include as definite a provision for enlistment for food supply as for service at the front.

In addition to more than one-half of those applying for enlistment and rejected because of unfitness for military service, there are more than two million of boys between the ages of 15 and 19 years in the cities and towns not now engaged in productive work vital to the Nation in the present war emergency. These constitute the most important hitherto unorganized and unutilized labor resource available for this emergency.

In consideration of all these facts the plan of military enlistment should be broadened so as to include in a national service those who, by reason of their age or physical condition, are permanently or temporarily incapacitated for active military duty but who are able to render to the Government equally indispensable service in the production of food, supplies, and munitions.

This enlistment should include three classes: Men beyond military age; men of military age but not accepted for active military duty; and boys under age for enlistment.

The Government should make plans at once for the mobilization of this important resource for the production of food and other necessities. This proposed enlistment in the national service should be regarded as point of the public patriotic service in the present war emergency and be given proper official recognition.

### The Harvest Emergency.

The husbanding of a matured crop promptly is often the most vital and crucial point in production and is the point of the heaviest labor demand on the farm. We suggest that the Federal Department of Agriculture, cooperating with the State Departments of Agriculture and other agencies, should take steps to mobilize sufficient farm labor to meet all emergencies which may arise.

### A Survey of the Food Supply.

We suggest the importance of a thorough-going survey of the food, labor, and other resources of the country and of the needs of the local communities to the end that every part of the country may be maintained in effective service. Therefore, we recommend:

That power be conferred upon the Secretary of Agriculture, in cooperation with the Federal Trade Commission so far as practicable, to secure such information regarding the food supply of the Nation and all business enterprises related thereto as may be necessary to enable Congress to legislate suitably for the protection of the people in the existing crisis and for the information of the Nation in its daily conduct, giving to the Secretary of Agriculture for this purpose power to administer oaths, to examine witnesses, and to call for the production of books and papers, with means of enforcement and penalties.

That authority be conferred upon the Secretary of Agriculture to establish market grades and classes of farm products, including seeds, and standards for receptacles for such products. For this purpose he should consult the various trades concerned. The established grades for corn and wheat undoubtedly will be of much advantage in purchasing supplies and the establishment of grades for other products will be fully justified for the same purpose. Furthermore, such standards, with a suitable degree of supervision of their application, will result in returning to the producer the value of the particular qualities he produces, thus encouraging adequate production in the future. This is of special importance in connection with the perishable crops, but applies with almost equal force to the staples.

The Secretary of Agriculture should be authorized by law to license warehouses, packing plants, mills, cold storages, produce

exchanges, cooperative and other shipping associations, commission merchants, auctioneers, brokers, jobbers, wholesale distributors, and other individuals, partnerships, associations, and corporations engaged in the business of marketing and distributing farm and food products. When directed by the President, the Secretary should have power, after advising with the Council of National Defense as to the necessity of such a step, to take over and operate such of these businesses as may be warranted, in a manner similar to receivership.

In order to facilitate the solution of transportation problems, Government agencies should do all in their power to bring about a relatively adequate supply of cars for moving food and other necessities.

Communities, counties, and cities should be urged to take steps that will lead toward a larger degree of local and district self-support, especially in perishable products, by making inventories of food needs and surveys of neighboring possibilities of production and in general by closer cooperation of the local consuming and producing interests, and by the provision of local marketing facilities.

### PRICE PUBLICITY.

To bring about a greater equality of distribution considering the consumptive demands of population centers, the market information facilities of the United States Department of Agriculture and the several State departments should be extended and made as effective as possible. It should include the publishing, as widely as possible for the information of producers and consumers of farm products, of average prices of foods, feeds, and live stock, and particularly those paid by the War Department, if purchases are made direct in the open market instead of by the usual contract method.

If not incompatible with wise policy, the War Department should determine and state where training camps are to be located, so that local production can be expanded to care in some degree for the increased consumption as a measure of general economy, and to effect a further relief of transportation facilities.

Appropriate steps should be taken through suitable Federal authorities, such as the Council of National Defense, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Commerce, and the Federal Trade Commission, to facilitate the supplying of agricultural implements and machinery, particularly for seeding and harvesting, by bringing about reasonable deliveries of the necessary materials, in preference to filling orders for such products as are not required in the existing emergency.

Steps should be taken at once to secure the preference movement of freight shipments of farm machinery, seeds, fertilizers and spraying materials.



#### PRICE FIXING, IF NECESSARY.

The very low food reserves of the world, due to last year's short crops, the increased demands due to the consumption and waste of war and the disappointing condition of the winter grain crop give ample assurance of profitable prices to producers this year. Therefore, the fixing of maximum or minimum prices need not be undertaken at this time, but the fact that such a course may become necessary in the future advises the creation of agencies which will enable the Government to act wisely when the necessity may arise. To this end, it would be well for the Congress of the United States to authorize the Council of National Defense, if deemed necessary, to purchase, store, and subsequently distribute food products, or to fix prices in any national emergency caused by a temporary or local overproduction, or by a sudden ending of the war, or by restraints of trade, manipulations or uneconomic speculation, in order that producers may not be required to suffer loss on account of the extraordinary efforts they are now asked to make, and in order that consumers may not be required to pay oppressive prices in case of disorganized or inadequate transportation. Information should be continually maintained by the Department of Agriculture that will afford the council intelligent data upon which to act wisely and fairly in any emergency.

#### Increased Home Economy.

We are the most wasteful people in the world in our ways of living. Our tastes and desires have been educated beyond our incomes.

Almost as great a saving may be made through the more economical manufacture, purchase, and use of food as can be made through processes of production which are immediately feasible.

Our breadstuff supply may be increased by one-twelfth, or 18,000,000 barrels of flour a year, by milling our wheat so as to make 81 per cent of the kernel into flour, instead of 73 per cent as at present. This flour would have as high nutritive value as that which we now use.

An important saving may be effected by making the diet as largely vegetarian as possible, without lowering food efficiency, by a partial substitution of such foods as beans and peas and of milk and its products, including skimmed milk, for the more expensive meats.

At present prices a larger use of corn and rice products as partial substitutes for the more expensive wheat products is suggested.

The substitution of the home-grown and home prepared grain products for the much more expensive refined commercial foods, known as breakfast foods, will make a large saving. Adequate gardens should provide the home supply of vegetables, which are expensive foods when purchased at existing

prices. The home storage and preservation of foods, such as eggs, vegetables, fruits, and meats, should be increased.

The serious food wastes that occur in many households through a lack of culinary knowledge and skill may be minimized through instruction in better methods.

These economies will be secured chiefly, if not fully, through the further education of housewives. It is highly important that all educational agencies available for this purpose engage in widespread propaganda and instruction concerning the economical use of human foods.

#### National and State Organization Needed.

The Council of National Defense is charged with the duty of mobilizing the resources of the Nation, having as one of its members the Secretary of Agriculture. We recommend additional machinery as follows:

A relatively small central agricultural body, whose services and presence might be required in Washington constantly, to be composed of men who have wide knowledge of agricultural matters and executive experience. In selecting these men, attention should be paid to geographical distribution.

A large national advisory body composed of representatives of the leading agricultural agencies and associations concerned not only in production but in distributing and handling commodities.

A small central agricultural body in each State representing various agricultural interests, including agricultural officials, representatives of agricultural colleges, bankers', business, farmers', and women's organizations, etc., concerned in the production, distribution, and utilization of food supplies and agricultural raw materials. This body should be designated by the governor and, if the State has a central council of safety or defense, should be coordinated with it.

Such county, urban, and other local bodies as the State authorities, including this State central agency, may see fit to suggest.

The national central body and the State central bodies will be expected to keep in intimate contact and to work in close cooperation.

#### An Emergency Appropriation.

To meet the extraordinary needs of agriculture in this emergency we recommend an appropriation of \$25,000,000, or so much thereof as may be needed, to be available immediately for the use of the Secretary of Agriculture in such manner as he may deem best.

The situation which now confronts our country is a great emergency—the greatest, perhaps, in its history. Emergency measures are needed to meet unusual conditions. The recommendations made in this statement have been formulated because it is believed they are necessary in order to meet present conditions. They are war measures. It is strongly urged that Congress and

State legislatures, in passing laws or in making appropriations intended to carry out these or other plans for assuring an adequate food and clothing supply, should, so far as possible, be governed by the principle that when the emergency ceases much permanent reconstruction in agricultural policies and plans may be necessary.

The recommendations in the main call for Federal action, but State governments can and should cooperate to the fullest degree in considering and executing plans of cooperation and of supplemental legislation and appropriation for the great common purpose herein enunciated.

#### Resolutions Committee of Conference on Agricultural Situation.

*Commissioners of agriculture.*—H. K. Bryson, Tennessee; G. A. Stauffer, Ohio; Jewell Mayes, Missouri; Charles S. Wilson, New York; J. N. Hagan, North Dakota; J. A. Wade, Alabama.

*Agricultural colleges.*—W. O. Thompson, Ohio; H. J. Waters, Kansas; H. L. Russell, Wisconsin; Eugene Davenport, Illinois; Clarence Ousley, Texas; J. M. Hamilton, Montana.

*United States Department of Agriculture.*—David F. Houston, Secretary of Agriculture; W. A. Taylor, Chief of the Bureau of Plant Industry; Charles J. Brand, Chief of the Office of Markets and Rural Organization.

Following are the subcommittees appointed to consider the subjects indicated and to draft appropriate resolutions:

*Production and labor.*—H. J. Waters, Eugene Davenport, J. A. Wade, Jewell Mayes, G. A. Stauffer, W. A. Taylor.

*Economy.*—J. M. Hamilton, H. K. Bryson, W. H. Jordan.

*Distribution and prices.*—Clarence Ousley, J. N. Hagan, Kenyon L. Butterfield, Charles J. Brand.

*Organization.*—W. O. Thompson, Charles S. Wilson, H. L. Russell, D. F. Houston.

#### Representatives Who Took Part in the Conference.

##### UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

David F. Houston, Secretary of Agriculture; Charles J. Brand, Chief of the Office of Markets and Rural Organization; Wm. A. Taylor, Chief of the Bureau of Plant Industry.

##### AGRICULTURAL COLLEGES.

*Alabama.*—J. F. Duggar, director of extension service. *Arkansas.*—Martin Nelson, dean, College of Agriculture; W. C. Lassetter, acting director of extension; J. G. Futrell, president, University of Arkansas.

*Colorado.*—Alvin Kezer, agronomist, Colorado Agricultural College.

*Delaware.*—Harry Hayward, dean, College of Agriculture.

*Georgia.*—J. K. Giles, assistant State agent in extension work.

*Illinois.*—Eugene Davenport, dean, College of Agriculture; Cyril G. Hopkins, chief in agronomy, College of Agriculture; Herbert W. Mumford, College of Agriculture.

*Indiana.*—W. E. Stone, president, Purdue University.

*Iowa.*—R. A. Pearson, president, Iowa State College, and member of executive committee of colleges and stations; C. F. Curtiss, Iowa State College.

*Kansas.*—H. J. Waters, president, Kansas State Agricultural College, and member of executive committee of colleges and stations; W. M. Jardine, dean, College of Agriculture.

*Kentucky.*—George Roberts, acting dean, College of Agriculture.

*Louisiana.*—W. R. Dodson, dean, College of Agriculture, and director of station.



*Massachusetts*.—Kenyon L. Butterfield, president, Association of Colleges and Stations.

*Michigan*.—R. S. Shaw, director, Agricultural Experiment Station.

*Minnesota*.—A. D. Wilson, director of extension work.

*Mississippi*.—W. H. Smith, president, Agricultural and Mechanical College; R. S. Wilson, acting director of extension work.

*Missouri*.—A. R. Hill, president, University of Missouri; F. B. Mumford, dean and director, College of Agriculture.

*Montana*.—J. M. Hamilton, president, State College of Agriculture.

*Nebraska*.—Samuel Avery, chancellor, University of Nebraska; E. A. Burnett, dean of agriculture; C. W. Pugsley, director of extension work; F. L. Haller, regent.

*New York*.—A. R. Mann, acting dean, College of Agriculture; W. H. Jordan, director of experiment station and member of executive committee of colleges and stations.

*North Carolina*.—W. C. Riddick, president, College of Agriculture and Engineering.

*North Dakota*.—E. F. Ladd, president, Agricultural College; Thomas P. Cooper, director, Agricultural Extension and Experiment Station.

*Ohio*.—W. O. Thompson, president, Ohio State University, and chairman executive committee of colleges and stations.

*Oklahoma*.—J. W. Cantwell, president, Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College.

*Pennsylvania*.—M. S. McDowell, director of extension work.

*South Dakota*.—E. C. Perisho, president, State College.

*Tennessee*.—Charles A. Keffler, director of extension work.

*Texas*.—Clarence Ousley, director of extension work.

*Vermont*.—J. L. Hills, dean, College of Agriculture; secretary of executive committee of colleges and stations.

*Virginia*.—Jesse M. Jones, director of extension work.

*West Virginia*.—John Lee Coulter, dean, College of Agriculture.

*Wisconsin*.—H. L. Russell, dean, College of Agriculture, and member of executive committee of colleges and stations.

*Wyoming*.—H. G. Knight, dean, College of Agriculture, and director of experiment station.

#### STATE AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONERS.

*Alabama*.—J. A. Wade, commissioner of agriculture.

*Arkansas*.—John H. Page, commissioner of agriculture.

*Georgia*.—L. B. Jackson, representing commissioner of agriculture.

*Illinois*.—B. M. Davison, secretary, State Board of Agriculture.

*Indiana*.—William Jones, financial secretary.

*Iowa*.—A. R. Corey, commissioner of agriculture.

*Kansas*.—J. C. Mohler, secretary, State Board of Agriculture.

*Kentucky*.—Mat S. Cohen, commissioner of agriculture.

*Louisiana*.—Harry D. Wilson, commissioner of agriculture.

*Missouri*.—Jewell Mayes, secretary, State Board of Agriculture.

*Montana*.—Chas. D. Greenfield, commissioner of agriculture.

*Nebraska*.—E. R. Danielson, secretary, State Board of Agriculture.

*New York*.—Charles S. Wilson, commissioner of agriculture.

*North Dakota*.—J. N. Hagan, commissioner of agriculture.

*Ohio*.—G. A. Stauffer, secretary, State Board of Agriculture.

*Pennsylvania*.—Charles E. Patton, secretary, Board of Agriculture.

*Tennessee*.—H. K. Bryson, commissioner of agriculture.

*Texas*.—Fred W. Davis, commissioner of agriculture.

*West Virginia*.—J. H. Stewart, commissioner of agriculture.

*Wisconsin*.—C. P. Norgord, commissioner of agriculture.

### RESOLUTIONS AT PACIFIC COAST CONFERENCE OF AGRICULTURAL OFFICIALS.

A conference of the State agricultural officials and representatives of the land-grant colleges, similar to that held at St. Louis, was held at Berkeley, Cal., on April 13. The conference was called at the request of the Secretary of Agriculture by President Benjamin Ide Wheeler, of the University of California. The seven Western States named below were represented in the conference.

Following is a telegraphic report of this conference addressed, under date of April 13, by President Wheeler as chairman, to the Secretary of Agriculture:

"At conference held to-day at University of California, in accordance with your suggestion, representatives of Arizona, California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington adopted unanimously following resolutions:

"*Resolved*, That the agricultural institutions of the seven Western States here represented express ourselves to Secretary Houston as heartily in accord with the conclusions of the St. Louis conference, and that we place our entire resources at the disposal and direction of the National Government in his effort to mitigate the present serious food shortage.

"*Further resolved*, That we at once acquaint the Secretary of Agriculture with the extent of our available resources, and that we furtherstate to him the additional funds needed to place the entire plan of agricultural advisement into operation in our States.

"*Further resolved*, That we advise our Representatives and Senators of our hearty accord with the Secretary of Agriculture and that we believe that a further Federal appropriation to grapple with the present agricultural situation would be wise.

"*Further resolved*, That since the agricultural extension field men are already Federal officers, and that for the period of war they are to be even under more direct Federal supervision; that the county agents and other field men be given such official designation as to dissociate them from civilians and bring to them the dignity and authority of other Federal officials who are occupied in prosecuting the war to a successful conclusion.

"BENJAMIN IDE WHEELER,  
"Chairman."